



GUIDELINES FOR REGISTRATION AND RECOGNITION OF A MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS UNIT WITH THE OFFICE OF THE SURGEON GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES

I. PURPOSE

The Office of the Surgeon General is the officially designated focal point in the federal government for the development of the Medical Reserve Corps of the Citizen Corps, USA Freedom Corps. The USA Freedom Corps and its component parts are a U.S. Presidential initiative, announced by President George W. Bush in his State of the Union address in January 2002.

This document provides guidelines for both Registration and Recognition of Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Units by the Office of the Surgeon General (OSG), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). **Registration** is the minimal level of involvement with the federal government's MRC program. It simply implies that a community is organizing an MRC unit but doesn't seek any greater involvement with the federal government's MRC program or that a community is unable at the time to meet the additional criteria (presented later in this document) for greater involvement with the federal government's MRC program. **Recognition** is a higher level of involvement with the federal government's MRC program and is achieved by meeting certain criteria. Recognized MRC units may be entitled to use the official MRC logo, receive Technical Assistance (TA) from the federal government, and obtain access to MRC Training Materials.

II. WHAT DOES MRC UNIT REGISTRATION MEAN?

A Registered MRC unit:

- **Seeks to be aligned with the MRC initiative by providing contact information and a summary description of itself, but either cannot meet all the requirements for recognition or chooses not to** (requirements listed in section IV).
- **May be eligible for advice or assistance from the OSG** on relevant MRC topics.

III. WHAT DOES MRC UNIT RECOGNITION MEAN?

A Recognized MRC unit:

- **Is officially recognized by the federal government as part of the USA Freedom Corps initiative**, along with all other officially recognized MRC units. As such, an officially recognized MRC unit is listed on the MRC Web site at: www.medicalreservecorps.gov.
- **Is eligible for authorization to utilize the official MRC logo in accordance with MRC guidelines.** When an application for Recognition is approved, the applicant will receive an authorization agreement detailing terms of use for the official MRC logo. Recognized MRC units will then complete and return the logo authorization to the Office of the Surgeon General. An approval for use signed by the Surgeon General or his designee will be sent to the recognized unit. This authorization can be revoked by the federal government at any time if the MRC logo and name are used in violation of the authorization guidelines.
- **Is authorized to obtain MRC technical assistance from the federal government**, at no or minimal cost to the MRC unit and subject to availability and related criteria. Information regarding technical assistance will be posted on the MRC Web site.
- **Is authorized to obtain password access to MRC training materials**, as these materials become available.
- **Agrees to share “lessons learned” and/or “best practices”** with other MRC units and the OSG.

IV. REQUIREMENTS FOR AN MRC UNIT TO BE OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZED

In order to be officially recognized by the Office of the Surgeon General, an MRC unit must meet certain criteria. These criteria are designed to be inclusive while maintaining an essential level of quality.

The criteria are as follows:

1. The MRC unit must be formed by a locally-based public or private non-profit organization with the intent to work in the local community (this could include a state agency which works locally). Local is defined as a county, town, tribe, or city within a state or territory of the United States of America. This may include a defined neighborhood in a large city.

2. **The MRC unit must work with appropriate local governmental entities** (e.g. departments of health and/or emergency response) and provide documentation that it is working in cooperation with these entities for the purposes of establishing a community-based, citizen volunteer Medical Reserve Corps unit. The medical/clinical practice functions of the Medical Reserve Corps unit must be consistent with state laws. ***In most states this requires that medical/clinical functions be under the overall supervision of a physician.*** It is understood that local assets, including physician availability, vary from community to community. Innovative approaches may need to be employed to fulfill state legal requirements.
3. **The MRC unit must have a relationship with the Citizen Corps Council (CCC)** in communities where there is a Citizen Corps Council (CCC) of the Citizen Corps, USA Freedom Corps. The relationship between the MRC unit and the CCC must be documented in a letter of support. A list of all CCCs and their contacts is posted at www.citizencorps.gov.
4. **The MRC unit must have basic organizational arrangements in place.** These would include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:
 - Leadership by qualified officials
 - An organizational structure
 - A terms of reference for the MRC unit to govern its operations (e.g. mission statement, statement of scope of operations)
 - An action plan for the coming year.
5. **The MRC unit must have a plan for additional functions**, beyond emergency response, to promote public health in the community.

V. **HOW DOES AN MRC UNIT APPLY FOR OFFICIAL REGISTRATION OR RECOGNITION?**

The ranking leader or principal contact of an MRC unit should complete and forward the attached form, along with the specified supporting documentation, to the Office of the Surgeon General at the following address:

Office of the Surgeon General
ATTN: MRC Staff
Room 18-66
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20857

VI. HOW LONG DOES THE REGISTRATION/RECOGNITION PROCESS TAKE AND HOW WILL I HEAR?

1. The OSG will review the application and make the determination whether an MRC unit is Registered or Recognized. The review process for Registration/Recognition of an MRC unit may take up to six weeks, once the complete application is received.
2. If the documentation submitted by the applicant is not sufficient or there are other concerns, the applicant will be advised in writing by a staff member of the OSG.
3. If an applicant MRC unit is approved for Recognition, the applicant will receive an authorization agreement detailing terms of use of the national MRC logo. MRC units approved for recognition will complete and return the logo authorization to the Office of the Surgeon General. An approval for use signed by the Surgeon General or his designee will be sent to the recognized unit.
4. If Registration/Recognition is denied, the applicant will be advised in writing, including the reasons for denial. An applicant may appeal the denial, but only through the provision of additional information that would address the original reasons for denial. Examples of reasons for denial might include: extensive overlap with an already-registered MRC unit, coupled with lack of evidence of need and support by local officials for an additional MRC unit, the applicant represents a foreign government, etc.
5. Additionally, OSG will request that the HHS Office of the Regional Health Administrator (RHA) in each of the ten HHS Regional Offices review and comment on the application. The OSG will make this request. However, for your own information, a list of the RHAs is provided on the MRC Web site at: <http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov>.

Disclaimers - What Being an OSG-recognized MRC Unit Does *Not* Mean

OSG-recognized MRC units are **not part of the federal government**.

OSG-recognized MRC units have **no greater entitlement** than any other eligible applicant for federal government funding.

OSG-recognized MRC units **may not use** the U.S. Public Health Service flag or uniforms.

OSG-recognized MRC units **do not have liability protection** from the federal government

OSG-recognized MRC units **have no defined level of certification from the federal government to respond to emergencies**.

In addition to the restrictions listed above, **OSG-registered MRC units are not entitled to use the MRC logo**.

Questions?

Call the MRC staff in the Office of the Surgeon General:
301/443-4000 or e-mail: mrccontact@osophs.dhhs.gov.

Attachment - MRC Registration Application Format



**MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS
CITIZEN CORPS
USA FREEDOM CORPS**

APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION OR RECOGNITION AS AN MRC UNIT

APPLYING FOR: Registration____ Recognition____

Name of MRC Unit: _____

Name of Applicant Organization: _____
(The applicant organization may be a public or private locally-based, non-profit entity.)

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name and Title of Ranking Official: _____

Principal Contact (if not the same as Ranking Official): _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ **County:** _____

State: _____ **Zip:** _____

Phone Number(s): _____

E-mail: _____ **Internet Address:** _____

Approval to include name of MRC unit and principal contact information in official listing on MRC Web Site (www.medicalreservecorps.gov):

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Title of MRC Official: _____

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF UNIT (Required for Registration and Recognition. Not to exceed one page. Describe status of development of the MRC unit, including milestones achieved, such as numbers of volunteers recruited, training level(s) achieved, etc.):

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION FOR RECOGNITION (Attach to Pages 1 and 2 of the application in the following order.):

- 1. Copies of letters or other appropriate documents demonstrating that the applying organization has the support of appropriate government (city, county, state, CCC, as appropriate) to establish the MRC unit.**
- 2. Copies of letters or other appropriate documents demonstrating that key community-based organizations are participating in the MRC in appropriate ways.**
- 3. Contact information for MRC leadership and CVs of key leaders.**
- 4. Applicant MRC unit's mission statement.**
- 5. Applicant MRC unit's organizational chart.**
- 6. Evidence that the MRC unit has held organizational meetings.**
- 7. Evidence that the MRC unit has an initial roster of volunteers.**
- 8. Applicant MRC unit's initial plan for promotion of public health in the community.**